


ASHINOYU & ITS ENVIRONS





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A
BRIEF SKETCH

OF

ASHINOYU AND ITS ENVIRONS,

COMPILED BY

M. K. TAMAKI.

Published by MATSUZAKA HOTEL,

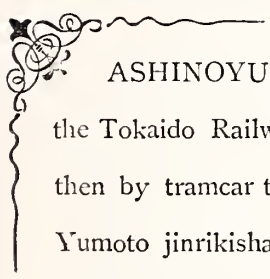
ASHINOYU, HAKONE.

1899.

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FROM YOKOHAMA TO ASHINOYU ITINERARY.

A decorative flourish consisting of a horizontal line with a small butterfly on the left, followed by a series of loops and a vertical line extending downwards.

ASHINOYU can be reached by taking the Tokaido Railway to Kozu, (2 hrs.) and then by tramcar to Yumoto ($1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.). From Yumoto jinrikishas can be taken to Miyano-shita, which is about an hours ride, thence it is about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles by kago (chair) or on foot, along a picturesque path to the place; thus altogether it is about half a day's journey from either Yokohama or Tokyo.

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A BRIEF SKETCH OF ASHINOYU AND ITS ENVIRONS.



HERE is not a more delightful trip within a moderate distance of the capital than one in this fascinating district of Hakone. The district is very mountainous, and is charmingly situated in the south-eastern corner of Sagami.

* * **Ashinoyu.**—Among the many thermal springs of Hakone, that of Ashinoyu is the most famous for it's curative properties. The hamlet is surrounded by beautiful hills and lofty mountains and is about 2,760 feet above the sea level. In summer time, therefore, the purity and coolness of

the air attract many visitors, who throng the place in order to avoid the heat and noise of town life. Although Ashinoyu has no extended view, lying as it does in the lower part of a valley, the gardens of the Matsuzaka Hotel are beautifully laid out. But if the visitor takes a few minutes walk towards the east, there is a lovely hill called Benten-yama, which commands a panoramic view of Odawara Bay, the peninsula of Miura with Enoshima, &c. lying before the eyes like a beautiful picture. In the north-western part of the village there is a road leading up Futagoyama, from the top of which all that is beautiful in nature can be seen at a glance. Especially notable is the calm and picturesque lake "Ashinoko." On one side of the lake the Imperial Detached Palace stands solemnly upon the peninsula, called Togashima,

which projects some distance into the lake, and against the azure sky there appear the bold outlines of the snow-clad peak of Fuji.

Before I leave this spot I would like to say something about the quality of the thermal spring of Ashinoyu. It belongs to the class of acidulous sulphur water, with a large amount of alkaline sulphide; which therefore, affects metal, for instance, if silver be put into the water it will tarnish by combining with the sulphur. The general appearance of the water is colourless but it has a strong sulphureous smell. It is of benefit in the following diseases:—

Chronic muscular rheumatism.

Abdominal plethora.

Stiffness of the muscles

Chronic catarrh of pharynx and larynx.

Diseases of skin, such as : Eczema, prurige.
Chronic inflammation of the uterus and ovaria.
Psoriasis, chronic Syphilis.
Irregular menstruation.
Chronic poisoning by lead or mercury.
Neuralgia, caused by Rheumatism.

There is a mineral water called Tekkosui which has also a slightly sulphureous ferruginous quality. Those suffering from poverty of blood would do well to take a small quantity every day.

* * * **Hakone.**—Hakone is a pretty village by the charming lake “Ashinoko,” with Byobuyama on the east, Yenokisawa-yama on the south-east, Kurakake-yama on the south and Yamabushi-toge on the west. This place is the steepest and most precipitous point of the Tokaido, forming the only passage to the west. In the pre-Restoration days,

every traveller was examined at the barrier in the village, the remains of which can be seen in the form of mouldering stone walls and the well-known pine tree.

Hakone can be reached by an hour's walk from Ashinoyu. Along the road leading to Hakone, one can see various monuments, such as the tombstones of the Soga Brothers, famous in history for their daring vendetta. Of the history, I will mention further in other pages ; a colossal stone-hewn image of Jizo produced, as tradition says, miraculously in a single night ; and other monuments of historic interest. Lake Ashi measure some nine miles in circumference. There are boats on the lake to take the visitor where he wishes. On all sides it is surrounded by graceful slopes of mountains, that forms a picture of un-

surpassing beauty. The lake owes its existence to successive volcanic Irruptions in the days out of memory. The Komaga-dake (5000 feet) the reigning monarch of all peaks in the neighbourhood towers up at the southern bank of the lake.

A branch of the Hotel stands on the very brink of the lovely lake commanding its varied scenery. One of the finest views from this point is the celebrated "Sakasa Fuji," the lake reflecting from its mirrored surface the snow-clad figure of the mountain.

Walking along the lake in a south eastern direction, one comes to a grove in which is the ancient shrine of Hakone Gongen, reached by a long flight of stone steps. Upon a promontory which is covered with green trees, stands the Imperial Summer Palace constructed in combined

foreign and Japanese styles.

**** Ubago and Ojigoku.**—A ferry-boat will carry visitors across the lake to Ubago, which is situated on its northern shore. This lovely little village has a thermal spring containing alum and salt, the stream from which falls like a cataract into a hollow stone excavated by the force of the water. The mineral spring of the place cures eye diseases. All visitors to the village are advised not to omit seeing the site of Ojigoku in the vicinity, where sulphurous fumes are constantly issuing from the crust of the earth.

**** Yunohanazawa and Kowakidani.**—Yunohanazawa is reached by a 15 minute's walk from the Matsuzaka Hotel. On account of its high position, the bird's-eye view of the surrounding country is very magnificent.

Descending for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Yunohana-
zawa in a south-eastern direction, we reach a place
called Kowakidani where there are two hotels,
one of which has accommodation for foreigners.
Walking up about 3 cho behind these hotels, the
visitors will find a mountain in the same state of
sulphurous action as Ojigoku, although on a
smaller scale. The water fall of Chisuji can be
reached from this place.

*** * Kiga and Sokokura**—About a mile
distant north of kowakidani, we reach the thermal
spring of Kiga, situated on the bank of a small
stream called Hayakawa which rises some
distance north of the north bend of Lake Ashi
and flows the south easterly direction through
the mountain ranges. The surrounding hills
are clothed with verdure ; and here and there

towering peaks give a charming variety to the scenery, which is well worth a visit. On way to Sokokura, there is a beautiful water-fall called Shirasagi.

Sokokura, next to Miyanoshita, is noted for its baths containing sulphur and salt.

*** * Miyanoshita and Dogashima.**—Miyanoshita is a pleasant resort, looking down a precipitous valley which affords a splendid view. The place being centrally situated among the Hakone mountains attracts a large crowd of holiday-makers. The Fujiya Hotel which is considered one of the best hotels in this country, stands in the centre of this magnificent panorama. The thermal springs of the place contain iron and salt.

About 20 minute's walk down the steep pass of Miyanoshita, visitors arrive at Dōgashima, along

which the Hayakawa flows. Mount Myojyo-gadake towers in the front, a fine landmark in the surrounding scenery. The cascades Shiraito and Matsugaoka, a natural park, are among the noted sights of the place.

*** * * Tonosawa and Yumoto.**—Tonosawa is about 2 miles from Miyanoshita, along the new road, one side of which is very thickly overshadowed with trees which grow on the surrounding mountain sides and on the other lies a valley. At the bottom of the valley a rapid torrent struggles among rocks and stones. On the way, is a charming little tea-house called Fujimi-tei, where a fine view of mount Fuji and Miyanoshita meets the gaze looking up the valley—a spectacle on the same time charming and sublime.

The finest view of Tonosawa is obtained from

Tamano-o bridge, which crosses the Hayakawa.

Yumoto is situated at the eastern end of the Hakone district and on the southern bank of the Hayakawa, so that it is the entrance to Hakone, being the nearest point to the Kozu station on the Tokaido Railway. A few cents will admit one to a beautiful garden with a cascade called Tamadare-no-taki.



How the Brothers Soga Avenged the Death of their Father.

We must carry our thoughts to a period seven centuries ago. Yoritomo, the first of the Shōgun rulers (A.D. 1186-1199) was at the summit of his power and prosperity, and was in fact, though not in name, the real master of his country. Among the many knights who thronged his court, were two famous warriors from the province of Sagami, Saburo Kawazu and Suketsune Kudō, the former a bold and daring soldier, whose only thought was of military exercise, and warlike exploits his only ambition, while the latter added to his military talents a great disposition to intrigue and scheming. The two men were kinsmen, but, as often happens amongst kinsmen, were not on

good terms—the disputed inheritance of a piece of farm land had broken their friendship.

Saburo soon forgot his quarrel, and continued to devote himself with all his wonted zeal to manly pastimes and the pleasures of the chase, but Suketsune brooded over his imagined wrongs, and nursing his anger, studied revenge.

One day, many knights from Sagami and Izu joined together in a hunting-expedition among the mountains of Hakone. Suketsune excused himself from attending, though Saburo went. That evening an ambush was laid in a lonely part of a forest through which Saburo had to pass on his way home, and the honest-hearted man fell a victim to the treachery of his vindictive kinsman.

Saburo's death brought great distress and misery to his family. He left a widow to mourn

his loss, and two young sons: but the sons were not old enough to take their father's place and receive his pension, and the only thing to be done was for the widow to marry again. This she did in a few months, and her second husband, a man named Soga, adopted Jyurō Sukenari, the elder of Saburo's children, as his own son, while the younger, Gorō Tokimune, a posthumous child, born some weeks after his father's death, was placed in a Buddhist Temple in Hakone, and dedicated to the priesthood.

Both boys were carefully tended by their adoptive parents, and as the years went by were taught their duty not only to the living but to the dead. They were early taught to consecrate themselves to the avenging of their father's murder.

The younger son, Gorō Tokimune (his name

had been changed for him, and he was known in the Temple as *Hako-o*) had the first opportunity of seeing his foe. Suketsune, unconscious of his danger, visited the Temple, and the young priest was with difficulty restrained by his master from rushing upon him there and then, and despatching him within the sacred precincts.

He did indeed restrain himself, but the self-restraint which he thus put upon himself only served to add fuel to the flame, and he resolved to abandon a profession which forbade him to take life; and by re-assuming the name which was his by birth proclaimed himself as the champion of his murdered father's cause. His elder brother followed his example, and from that time, the two sons of Saburo, together with two old retainers of the family, Onio and Dozaburo, resolved to devote

themselves entirely to the work of the *vendetta*.

It was some time before they got an opportunity, for Suketsune was now on his guard, and avoided everything that might serve as an occasion for his watchful foes. However, in May, 1193, Yoritomo invited all his retainers to a hunting-party at the base of Mount Fuji, and the brothers thought that now at length their hour of vengeance had come. But they were doomed to disappointment. Scarcely had they got within a few yards of Suketsune with the hope to assassinate him during the confusion of the chase, when, with their hands upon their sword hilts, they were called away by Dozaburō who brought them a message from their mother to the effect that she was dying, and desirous of seeing them at once.

Without a moment's hesitation, they abandoned

their enterprise and hastened home, where, to their surprise they found their mother, apparently quite well, awaiting their arrival, with two young ladies, Tora and Shosho, to whom the brothers had for some time been betrothed, and their half-brother, a son of Soga by the second marriage. It was a pleasant surprise to them to find their mother well and strong, it was another sort of a surprise to them when she began to scold them for their folly and wickedness in trying to compass the death of Suketsune on the hunting field. It was a still more painful surprise—though, at any other moment, it would have been a pleasant one—to have their mother insisting on their getting married there and then, so that they might the more effectually weaned from their hazardous enterprise. There seemed, however, to be no

help for it—the young men had to promise obedience to their mother, and the marriage ceremony was performed without delay. There were more tears than smiles at that bridal.

At midnight Gorō stealthily left his sleeping bride and slipped out into the verandah. Jurō did the same. The two brothers had simultaneously been moved by an irresistible impulse to resume their work of vengeance, and finding themselves to be of one mind in the matter, they quietly donned their ceremonial wedding garments and went forth to finish their work.

Unfortunately, the breaking of a weak board in the verandah gave the alarm, and the brides awoke with a start to find their husbands gone. They rushed out immediately and would have gone in pursuit of the brothers, had not the

mother restrained them. The old lady, it seems, knew her sons' natures only too well. The difficulties she had put in their way would, she was certain, only serve to increase their desire for vengeance. At the same time she knew that there was a traitor in the house : Soga's son was a spy in the service of Suketsune : and she had to be careful to keep her husband Soga free from all responsibility for the actions of Saburo's sons. She had thrown dust in the eyes of the traitor by forbidding her sons to pursue the *vendetta* any further ;—and now, that object having been gained, she was only too proud to admire the dauntless spirit of her two loyal-hearted boys. So the mother and the brides of an hour contented themselves with the thoughts that they were the womenfolk of *samurai*, and that it was their duty

to stir up their men to doughty deeds.

Still, they were all impatient to know the result, and accordingly mounted on horses they rode towards the hunting field, though it still wanted several hours before daylight. On the way they met a party of persons returning from the camp, from one of whom they learned that news had just come to Yoritomo of his brother's suicide, that, in consequence, the hunting party was to be broken up at once, and that only if it rained would the departure of the guests be delayed. Their mother was desperate at this news, for a miscarriage of the undertaking now would be fatal to all concerned: the brides, with that trust in Heaven which seldom fails of its reward, set themselves to prayer, and wrestled fervently in an agony of supplication until at last they got what

they prayed for. The sky became overcast, the thunder began to peal, and finally torrents of rain effectually prevented the dispersion of Yoritomo's guests. Rain falling on May 28th, is to this day called "the rain of Tora and Shosho's tears."

In the camp everything was quiet, save the tread of watchmen. It was a splendid opportunity for the brothers Soga. They came into the camp (for they had obtained pass ports from their sympathetic friends), carrying burning torches in their hands. They were clad in the ceremonial robes purposely presented to them by their mother the evening before. They talked of the near consummation of their life-long object, and then their hearts thrilled with joy ; but when they talked of their mother tears flowed down their cheeks. Gorō took off his cap, caught the rain in

it, and handed the cap to his brother Jurō. "Let us drink a farewell-cup brother," observed Gorō, "for in the confusion of the scuffle we may not see each other again in this world." Jurō drank a little, and gave the rest to his brother, vowing that howsoever often they might visit this world in the course of transformation they would forever be tried by bonds of blood fraternity. They passed one guard after another and arrived at the inner part of the premises. By that time the showers cleared away and from several camps the noise and confusion of packing luggage began to reach the brothers' ears. They stopped transfixed to the ground. A friend of theirs happened to come near them, on duty as night-guard. He gave them a hint as to Suketsune's camp, and further whispered to them the joyful news that

Suketsune was to start with Lord Yoritomo, and that all was quiet and still in his camp. They thanked this marrior and hastened on to the camp. They jumped over the wooden palings and were led by another of Tora's and Shosho's friends to the chamber of Suketsune. The noise in the chamber wakened Suketsune's men, and the utmost confusion ensued, men running and women screaming. Having dispatched their mortal foe, the brothers ran out of the camp and squeezed the water out of their sleeves into their mouths to appease their thirst. "What joy, what joy, Gorō; the task was easy enough, compared with our eternal longing. But I was so excited, in consequence of too much joy, that I think I forgot to give the final stab to Suketsune. Sure our strokes finished him, but not to have given

the final stab would stain our honour, and would be coustrued to mean that we lacked presence of mind." "Exactly," replied Gorō; "please be on guard here then, brother, for I will undertake the task myself." With that the gallant Gorō rushed into the camp once more, this time boldly and openly. He bestrode the corpse lying in a pool of blood and thus addressed it. "Hear, Suketsune, men become friend or foe according to the impulse of their will. Be purged of all sources of sin and attain Nirvana." He unsheathed a dagger, a dagger which Suketsune himself had given him on his visit to the Temple at Hakone, sometime before, and gave him the *coup de-grace*.


"It is easy enough now," they said, "for us to make good our escape; but it would be more noble to cross our rusty swords with the bright

blades of some of Lord Yoritomo's retainers."

So they stood and shouted that the sons of Saburo, Jurō and Gorō, were standing there, having avenged the death of their father on Suke-tsune ; and that they were ready to fight any that chose to come and attack them.

A desperate combat ensued. Jurō was soon overpowered and killed, but Gorō cut his way into the very presence of Yoritomo, and was at last seized from behind by a man disguised as a woman, and taken prisoner. He was executed at the age of twenty, lamented by Yoritomo and all the *samurai* of Kamakura.

— *Classical Tales of Old Japan.*



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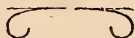
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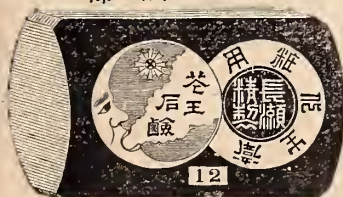
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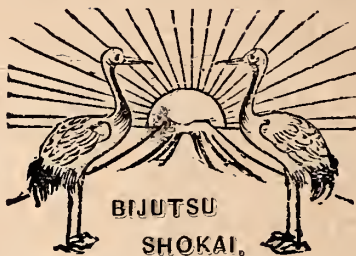
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